Classical language status to Kannada

1521. SHRI JANARDHANA POOJARY:
SHRI K.B. SHANAPPA:

Will the Minister of CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that certain Indian languages are being accorded the 'Classical Language' status;

(b) if so, the details in this regard with criteria for identifying and conferring such a status on a language and the number of languages that have been so honoured;

(c) whether there is a demand from the State Government of Karnataka to confer 'Classical Language' status on Kannada Language;

(d) if so, the details in this regard; and

(e) the Government's reaction thereto?

THE MINISTER OF CULTURE (SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI): (a) Yes Sir.

(b) A new category of languages as 'Classical Languages' was created by Government, and the following criteria were laid down to determine the eligibility of languages to be considered for classification as a 'Classical Language':—

i. High antiquity of its early texts/recorded history over a period of 1500-2000 years.

ii. A body of ancient literature/texts, which is considered a valuable heritage by generations of speakers.

iii. The literary tradition be original and not borrowed from another speech community.

iv. The classical language and literature being distinct from modern, there may also be a discontinuity between the classical language and its later forms or its offshoots.

Only two languages *viz.* Tamil & Sanskrit have been declared as 'Classical language'.

(c) Yes, Sir.

(d) Government of Karnataka and several other organizations have represented to declare Kannada as a classical language.

(e) The requests were forwarded to the Sahitya Akademi for the consideration of the Committee of Linguistic Experts.

Heritage villages/towns in tourism map

1522. SHRI B.J. PANDA:
MS. PRAMILA BOHIDAR:

Will the Minister of CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to declare the birthplace of prominent freedom fighters and martyrs as heritage villages/towns to bring these on the tourism map;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) what are the details of such villages/towns falling in Orissa?

THE MINISTER OF CULTURE (SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI): (a) to (c) At present, there is no such proposal under consideration.

Development of Bodhgaya in Bihar

1523. SHRI B.J. PANDA:
MS. PRAMILA BOHIDAR:

Will the Minister of CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to prepare a Master Plan for development of Bodhgaya in Bihar, an important destination in a Buddhist tourists itinerary;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether Government are aware that Orissa is also a hub of Buddhist tourism; and